



THE FACULTY OF JOURNALISM AND MASS COMMUNICATION OF SOFIA UNIVERSITY "ST. KLIMENT OHRIDSKI" SOFIA, BULGARIA

organizes an international conference together with our academic partners

Eastern Kentucky University, USA

Vilnius University, Lithuania

Vytautas Magnus University, Lithuania

the Polytechnic Institute of Lisbon, Portugal

Batumi Shota Rustaveli University, Georgia

University of Bucharest, Romania

on the topic of

MEDIA AND COMMUNICATION IN THE PLATFORM SOCIETY: AUTHENTICITY, RELIABILITY, TRUST

The conference will be held on the 29th and 30th of October 2026 on the video conference platform Zoom.



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ESCOLA SUPERIOR
DE COMUNICAÇÃO SOCIAL



October 29th, 2026 (Thursday)

10:00 h (UTC + 02:00) - [Opening speech](#) by the Dean of the Faculty of Journalism and Mass Communication of Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski"

Prof. Dr. Vesselina Valkanova

[Plenary Session](#) – Beginning 10:15 h (UTC + 02:00)

Moderator: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Manuela Manliherova

(working language – English)

Shashwati Goswami (Indian Institute of Mass Communication, India). Vertical Gratification: Political Economy of Micro-Drama

Saulė Jokūbauskienė, Daiva Siudikienė, Ingrida Girnienė (Vilnius University, Lithuania). Students' Strategies for Evaluating Information Quality in the Age of Digital and AI Tools

Szilágyi-Gál Mihály and Ráti József (ELTE Média és Kommunikáció Tanszék, Hungary). Rhetoric, Truth and Action – An Analysis of Trump's Tweets

Ignas Kalpokas (AUBG, Bulgaria). Affective Truths and the Fragility of Trust in the Platform Society

Plenary Discussion



Afternoon session – beginning 13:00 h (UTC + 02 :00)

[Panel: AI, Algorithms & Digital Media Transformation](#)

Moderator: Prof. Dr. Simeon Vassilev

(working language – Bulgarian)

Vesselina Valkanova (Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", Bulgaria). Research Philosophy and Methodological Approach of the Media Survey Center at Sofia University - from Isolated Snapshots to Outlining Long-term Trends

Maya Stoyanova (Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", Bulgaria). Algorithmic Mediation of Visuality: Dynamics Between User Perception and Design Optimizations in YouTube Thumbnails

Aneta Milkova (Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", Bulgaria). Artificial Intelligence and the Transformation of Public Communication in the Context of Algorithmic Publicity

Milyana Veleva (Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", Bulgaria). Challenges Facing News Agency Journalism with the Rise of Artificial Intelligence

Milena Ilieva-Momchilova (Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", Bulgaria). Generative Artificial Intelligence and the Challenges to Authenticity and Trust in Political Communication

Venelina Ivanova (Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", Bulgaria). Platformization of Media Business Models: Theoretical Dimensions of Economic and Technological Dependency in the Era of Hypercapitalism

Ivo Todorov (Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", Bulgaria). From the Airwaves to the Algorithm: The Future of Public Media on Social Media and Strategies for Building Trust

Lora Petkova (Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", Bulgaria). The Flatterer Effect: How Generative AI Limits Critical Thinking and Crates Self-confirmation bubble.

Ralina Tropankeva (Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", Bulgaria). Generative Artificial Intelligence in Online Media and Television: Hallucinations, Fact-Checking, and Ethical Boundaries.

Panel Discussion



Afternoon session – beginning 13:00 h (UTC + 02:00)

Panel: Journalism, Verification & the Architecture of Trust

Moderator: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Orlin Spasov

(working language – English)

Lilia Raycheva (Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", Bulgaria). Sustaining Media Values in the Platform Society

Justine Toms (New Bulgarian University, Bulgaria). Media transformation in the AI and social platforms era

Nikola Vangelov (Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", Bulgaria). The Semiotics of Authenticity in AI-Generated Advertising: Trust and Credibility in the Platform Society

Teodora Georgieva (Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", Bulgaria). Authenticity Criteria for Journalistic Investigations on Online Platforms Panel discussion

Desislava Sotirova (Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", Bulgaria). Synthetic Content, Media Authority and Trust in Public Communication

Yotka Pancheva (Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", Bulgaria). Adoption Without Understanding: The AI Literacy Gap in Bulgarian Journalism

Diana Kultchitskaya (New Bulgarian University, Bulgaria). Why does the Bulgarian public distrust the media? Factors explaining disengagement from journalistic content.

Diana Maria Ioana Florea (University of Bucharest, Romani). The transparency of fact-checking: How alternative media in Romania prove their reliability

Viktoriya Simeonova (Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", Bulgaria). Platformization of Investigative Journalism: The Bulgarian Experience

Diana Bancheva Hristozova (Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", Bulgaria). Accessibility on Air: The Social Function of Media Regulation

Panel Discussion



Afternoon session – beginning 15:00 h (UTC + 02:00)

[Panel: Institutional, Corporate & Strategic Communication](#)

Moderator: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mila Serafimova

(working language - Bulgarian)

Anita Peykova-Bedin (Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", Bulgaria). Strategic Communications—Management, Models, Practices, Change, and Organizational Effects: A Comparison of Kärcher in the Retail Sector and Stellantis in the Automotive Industry

Galina Mitkova (Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", Bulgaria). Crisis Communication by Local Authorities During Floods in the Platform Society: A Comparative Analysis of Practices Relevant to Public Trust

Gergana Boneva (Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", Bulgaria). Trust in Corporate Communication in the Platform Society: Between the Corporate Message and Human Presence

Elitsa Stoycheva (Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", Bulgaria). The Transformation of Corporate Image in the Platform Society: The Audience as Co-Author of Communication Messages

Iliyana Marinova (Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", Bulgaria). Restoring Trust in the Platform Society: A Strategic Framework for Institutional Communication Against Disinformation

Maria Georgieva (Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", Bulgaria). Public Communications and Media Transformation

Petya Stefanova (Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", Bulgaria). The Culture of Internal Communication in the Corporate and Institutional Sectors

Stefani Yankova (Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", Bulgaria). From Algorithmic Visibility to Public Trust: A New Theoretical Model for Evaluating PR Campaigns in the Platform Environment

Stanimira Pashova (Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", Bulgaria). Institutional Legibility as a Prerequisite for Trust: Visual Communication in the Digital Environment of Public and Private Hospitals in Bulgaria

Tsvetelina Uzunova (Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", Bulgaria). Digital Challenges to Public Communication in the Context of State Authority

Panel discussion



Afternoon session – beginning 15:00 h (UTC + 02:00)

[Panel: Media Industries, Culture & Digital Practices](#)

Moderator: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Kalin Kalinov

(working language - English)

Teodora Petrova, Krassimir Todorov, Manuela Toteva (Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", Bulgaria, Schiller University – Heidelberg, Germany). The use of mobile networks- technological and social change

Biser Zlatanov (Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", Bulgaria). Technofeudalism or Cartel Capitalism And Why It Matters for the Media Markets?

Nikolay Kolev (Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", Bulgaria). Technical requirements for video content captured with a smartphone for broadcast television

Georgi Alexandrov (Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", Bulgaria). The Economic Scale of Academic Publishing

Ivanka Valova (Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", Bulgaria). Cinematic Value Issues in Partnerships of Prominent Scientists in Five Biographical Films

Paula-Grațîela Cernamoriț (University of Bucharest, Romania). Meaningful Gamification in Romanian County Libraries: A Thematic Analysis of Online Public

Nicoleta Corpaci (University of Bucharest, Romania). Contemporary Libraries as Cultural Mediators in the Community: Theoretical Perspectives and Communication Strategies in Managerial Discourse

Mihaela Martin. Nătălița-Mihaela Frumușanu (Babeș-Bolyai University, Romania). CLIL's evolution in online education

Antonina Lozanova (University of National and World Economy, Bulgaria). Regional Media in the Network Society: Platform Strategies for Engaging the Internally Migrated Audience

Ina Ivanova (Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", Bulgaria). Media Expertise and Independent Criticism in Fashion as an Antidote to Digital Fatigue

Diana Kostova (Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", Bulgaria). Artificial Intelligence as a Co-Creator of Media Content: Challenges for Editorial Responsibility, Authenticity and Trust

Daniel Nenchev (Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", Bulgaria). The Banana as a Communication Weapon: Humour and Political Satire in the Contemporary Public Sphere

Panel discussion



October 30th, 2026 (Friday)

Morning session – beginning 10:00 h (UTC + 02:00)

Panel: Audiences, Influencers & Visual Cultures

Moderator: Prof. Dr. Rossen Stoyanov

(working language - Bulgarian)

Rossen Stoyanov (Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", Bulgaria). Digital Hyper-Communication and Emotional Loneliness—Changes in Social and Socializing Practices and Phenomena in the Platform Society.

Maria Popova (Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", Bulgaria). Art Influencers on Media Platforms

Leda Tsvetkova (Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", Bulgaria). Visual Communication of Television Brands in the Platform Society: A Factor for Authenticity, Trust, and Recognition

Rositsa Krasteva (Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", Bulgaria). Representations of Age in Advertising Communication and Audience Trust

Viktoria Mladenova (Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", Bulgaria). The Transformation of Influencers into Celebrities and the Effect on Perceived Authenticity and Trust

Lora Vitkova (Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", Bulgaria). The Digital Transformation of Social Interactions: The Convergence of Interpersonal and Parasocial Relationships in the Post-COVID-19 Environment

Simona Raikovska (Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", Bulgaria). Netflix's Vision for the "Korean Wave" in the Global Streaming Ecosystem

Danira Dospevska (Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", Bulgaria). Digital Professional Networks and Organizational Communication: The Role of LinkedIn in Employer Branding

Viktor Chulev (Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", Bulgaria). Auditory (Pseudo)Intimacy in Film-Themed ASMR Episodes in the Digital Environment Panel discussion

Daniela Palazova (University of National and World Economy, Bulgaria). Platformization of News: Erosion of the Journalist's Gatekeeping Role under the Pressure of Social Media

Panel discussion



Morning session – beginning 10:00 h (UTC + 02:00)

Panel: Organizations, Institutions & Communicating Trust

Moderator: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Svetlana Stankova

(working language - English)

Dimitrina Stefanova, Alexander Hristov (Southwestern University "Neofit Rilski", Bulgaria, Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", Bulgaria). The concept of strategy in communication research and practice: uses and misuses

Jill Deschner-Warner (Mittweida University of Applied Science, Germany). Intercultural Communication and Workplace Thriving in Multicultural Workplaces

Akmalova Behruza Olimjon Kizi (University of Journalism and Mass Communications of Uzbekistan, Uzbekistan). Influencer Marketing as a Crisis Communication Tool in the Foodservice Industry: Building Consumer Trust in the Digital Age

Mihaela Coman (University of Bucharest, Romania). The Rhetoric of Institutional Exculpation in Press Statements: A Comparative Analysis of Public and Private Healthcare Facilities in Patient Mortality Crises

Mihaela Condrea (University of Bucharest, Romania). Building Trust through Environmental Communication on Social Media: Discursive Strategies of Romanian Public Opinion Leaders

Ștefan Ghenița-Iuliana (University of Bucharest, Romania). Occupational portraits and authenticity in online personal branding

Ivelina Taushanova (Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", Bulgaria). Communicating with Stakeholders in the Platform Society: Strategies, Trust and Institutional Practices

Yoana Stefanova (Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", Bulgaria). Transformation of medical communication through AI integrations

Boyan Zahariev (Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", Bulgaria). Communicating Sustainability in the Platform Society: Building Trust Through Authentic Narratives

Nevena Doycheva-Ryan (Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", Bulgaria). Current Challenges to Digital Communication

Panel discussion



Afternoon session – beginning 13:00 h (UTC + 02:00)

[Panel: Journalism, Ethics, Public Interest & Democratic Communication](#)

Moderator: Prof. Dr. Nikolay Mihaylov

(working language - Bulgarian)

Nikolay Mihaylov (Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", Bulgaria). Journalistic Ethics and Justice: Conflicts of Values and Media Convergence

Evelina Kristanova (SWPS University, Poland). Radio Journalism: The Case of the Polish Service of Radio Free Europe. Do Journalists Today Still Care About the Quality of Information?

Orlin Spasov (Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", Bulgaria). Online content moderation: between the participatory culture and civic engagement

Victoria Biserova (Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski," Bulgaria). Between Ethics and Regulation: ESG Practices in Contemporary Book Publishing

Stoyan Genov (Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski," Bulgaria). The Press and Public Finances a Century Ago: National Consensus, Economic Illusions, and Political Undertones in the Coverage of the 1926 Refugee Loan

Stilia Felici Paunova (Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski," Bulgaria). The Foundation of Digital Assets, Digital Counterparty Risk, and Catalyzing the End Through Digital Death /Differential Scales/

Dilyana Kirkovska (Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski," Bulgaria). Defining and Countering Disinformation and FIMI Narratives in Digital Society—Cases in Bulgaria

Irena Petrova (Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski," Bulgaria). The Contemporary Media Process Through the Lens of Reflective Journalism and the Long-Term Impact of News on Society

Alexandrina Alexandrova (Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski," Bulgaria). Transmedia Approaches in Children's Healthcare - Dimensions of Authenticity, Reliability, and Communication Effectiveness

Radoslava Domuschieva (Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski," Bulgaria). Crowdsourcing of Media Information - bTV News' Social Campaign "How Long!?" and Audience Participation

Petya Kantareva (Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski," Bulgaria). The Transformation of Political Communication in an Algorithmic Environment: New Mechanisms of Political Influence and Crisis PR

Panel discussion



Afternoon session – beginning 13:00 h (UTC + 02:00)

[Panel: Politics, Democracy & Contested Truths](#)

Moderator: Prof. Dr. Svetlozar Kirilov

(working language – English)

Svetlozar Kirilov (Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", Bulgaria). Ideological Aspects of Russian Films about Wars in Afghanistan and Chechnya

Teodora Petrova, Sakis Gounas (Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", Bulgaria, International Hellenic University, Greece). The changing patterns of political marketing as part of social digital marketing / case study of Greek and Bulgarian examples/

Svetlana Stankova (Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", Bulgaria). Platform Logic and the Formation of Political Trust in Algorithmically Mediated Political Communication

Mila Serafimova (Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", Bulgaria). Communication Resilience of Public Institutions in Times of Crisis: A Framework for Trust in the Platform Society

Alim Alper Cesur (Kocaeli University ,Turkey). The Burden of Victory: Self-Balkanism and Identity Crisis in Instagram Memes Following Bulgaria's Eurovision 2026 Win

Lora Simeonova (Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", Bulgaria). The TikTok Parliament: Bulgarian MPs in the Platform Society

Victoria Atanasova (Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", Bulgaria). James Gillray and Archetypes of Power: The Historical Legacy of Cartooning in the Digital Age.

Vaiva Šalaševičiūtė (Vilniaus Magnus University, Lithuania). Synthetic Media in Political Communication: A Scoping Review

Cristina Elena Rădulescu (University of Bucharest, Romania). Authenticity in the Street: The Social Representation of Student Protests in the Media. From the 1990 University Square to the 2026 Demonstrations

Valentin Vasile (University of Bucharest, Romania). Constructing Authenticity, Reliability, and Trust in War Correspondence: Comparative Perspectives on Reporting the Battles of Plevna during the Russo-Turkish War (1877-1878)

Iva Ivanova (Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", Bulgaria). Designing Trust in Visual Advocacy: Authenticity and Reliability Cues in Civic Campaigns against Democratic Regression

Panel Discussion



Afternoon session – beginning 15:30 h (UTC + 02:00)

[Round Table “The Media Landscape in Bulgaria - Trends and Prospects”](#)

Moderator: Iva Ivanova

(working language - Bulgarian)

The Round Table is organised within the project “Research on the Media Environment in Bulgaria: Meta-Analysis, Methodology and Approaches to Studying the Impact of Media Transformations on Social Processes” (KP-06-H75/6) chaired by Prof. Dr. Vesselina Valkanova, funded by the Bulgarian National Science Fund.

The discussion will bring together researchers and media professionals to examine key trends, challenges and future perspectives in the Bulgarian media environment, with a focus on the transformation of journalism and media practices, digital and platform-driven change, public trust, professional standards, changing audience behaviour, and the broader impact of media transformations on social processes.

The format will include short introductory contributions by the invited participants, followed by an open moderated discussion.